

	<b>Zero Tolerance for Abuse and Neglect</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	ACIA is committed to safeguarding the rights, dignity, and wellbeing of all people with disability. This policy sets a clear expectation of zero-tolerance for any form of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or violence, regardless of the source. It outlines the minimum requirements for ACIA members and service providers in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting abuse and neglect in all care settings.
<b>Scope</b>	This policy applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Service Providers certified under the Australian Community Industry Standard (ACIS).</li> <li>• ACIA member organisations and their staff, contractors, volunteers, and representatives.</li> <li>• Situations involving people with disability, their families, informal support networks, and others interacting with the care environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Policy Statement</b>	ACIA upholds a zero-tolerance position on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Abuse, neglect or exploitation by Service Providers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any act or omission that causes harm, mistreatment, coercion, or exploitation of a person with disability is strictly prohibited.</li> <li>• Providers must implement and maintain systems to prevent, detect, and respond to abuse, including robust incident management and staff screening practices.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Abuse or neglect by family members or informal support networks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service Providers must actively identify, and report suspected or actual abuse by parents, carers, guardians, or other informal supports.</li> <li>• Where it is safe to do so, Providers should assist the person with a disability to access advocacy or protective services.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Abuse of children by people with disability or their carers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers must recognise that all children, whether recipients of care or living in the household, have a right to be safe from harm.</li> <li>• Where a person with disability or their carer is suspected of harming a child, mandatory reporting obligations must be followed immediately.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Failure to report abuse and neglect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-reporting is unacceptable. All staff and Providers are required to promptly report concerns, incidents, or allegations of abuse or neglect to the relevant statutory bodies and to the appropriate scheme funder, where applicable.</li> <li>• Providers must maintain a culture where speaking up is encouraged and whistleblower protections are in place.</li> </ul> </li> </ol>
<b>Responsibilities</b>	All ACIA members and certified providers must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote a strong safeguarding culture across their organisation.</li> <li>• Provide staff with regular training in abuse prevention, identification, and mandatory reporting.</li> <li>• Ensure all complaints and incidents are acted on promptly and transparently.</li> <li>• Establish policies that are aligned with this Zero-Tolerance Policy and regularly reviewed.</li> <li>• Cooperate fully with investigations by statutory authorities.</li> </ul>

<b>Consequences of Breach</b>	<p>Failure to comply with this policy may result in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspension or termination of ACIA membership.</li> <li>• Withdrawal of ACIS certification.</li> <li>• Reporting to relevant statutory and funding bodies.</li> <li>• Legal consequences under applicable state or Commonwealth legislation.</li> </ul>
<b>References/ Resources</b>	<p>ACIA Code of Conduct  Australian Community Industry Standard (ACIS)  NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework (where applicable)  State and Territory mandatory reporting legislation  National Principles for Child Safe Organisations</p>
<b>Review</b>	<p>This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if there are changes to legislation, national safeguarding guidance, or emerging risks in the sector.</p>